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SIPDIS

NSC FOR FRIED/WILSON

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SUBJECT: PARLIAMENT LEADER HRUSOVSKY'S APRIL VISIT TO
WASHINGTON AND MIAMI

Classified By: CDA SCOTT N. THAYER FOR REASONS 1.4 (b, d)

1. (C) SUMMARY: The April visit of a Slovak parliamentary delegation led by Speaker Pavol Hrusovsky will be a useful opportunity to press our agenda on Iraq, minority rights, religious registration, and while coordinating on areas where we already agree like trafficking and Cuba. Hrusovsky has ambitious appointment requests which need not be fulfilled in their entirety. END SUMMARY

2. (SBU) Charge and Pol-Econ Chief met March 23 with Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic (Parliament) Pavol Hrusovsky about his upcoming visit to the U.S. Hrusovsky plans to arrive in Washington April 17, then go on to Miami on April 22. He wants to follow-up on the momentum created by President Bush's February 24 visit to Slovakia to discuss policy areas where Slovakia and the U.S. have common goals, for example Cuban human rights. Hrusovsky also plans to lobby Congress on issues such as visa legislation and the coalition support fund. Hrusovsky is chairman of the conservative Christian Democratic Movement (KDH); representatives of four other parties in Parliament will accompany Hrusovsky:

-- Pavol Kubovic, MP for the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (SDKU), Vice-Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee and Mayor of the Bratislava neighborhood of Ruzinov;
-- Laszlo Nagy, MP for the Party of the Hungarian Coalition (SMK), Chair of the Committee on Human Rights;
-- Robert Kalinak, MP for the opposition party Smer, Chair of the Commission on Defense and Security;
-- Tibor Cabaj, MP and recently-appointed caucus leader for the opposition party Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS).

3. (C) Legislature: Hrusovsky, through the Slovak embassy in Washington and the International Republican Institute, has requested several meetings on Capitol Hill on April 20:

Speaker J. Dennis Hastert (R-IL) (apparently confirmed)
Cong. John Mica (R-FL)
Cong. Chris Smith (R-NJ)
Cong. Tom DeLay (R-TX)
Sen. Mel Martinez (R-FL) (Hrusovsky is most likely to meet him in Miami)
Sen Joseph Lieberman (D-CT)
Sen John McCain (R-AZ)
Sen. Sam Brownback (R-KS)

Note: Smith and Brownback co-chair the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Commission), which has called Slovakia to task on issues such as religious registration, Roma rights, and anti-Semitism. The Department should strongly encourage such a meeting, followed by a longer, more in-depth session between CSCE staff and accompanying staff. .

4. (C) Executive Branch: Within the administration, Hrusovsky is requesting meetings with Secretary Rice, NSC Director Hadley, and Vice President Cheney, or with their designated representatives. Although Hrusovsky had a meeting with Vice President Cheney in 2002 which included a drop-by by the President, the most appropriate would be with NSA Hadley, his deputy, or the senior director for Europe.

5. (U) Think Tanks: Hrusovsky can be a thoughtful, articulate speaker. Charge encouraged him to do a public program about Slovakia, perhaps sponsored by a the Center for Strategic and International Studies, the American Enterprise Fund, or the Heritage Foundation.

6. (C) NGOs: A devout Catholic, Hrusovsky should visit faith-based organizations delivering services to disadvantaged groups. The IRI representative resident in Slovakia is working to arrange this part of the program. Given the KDH's wary view of immigrants in Slovakia, we have recommended that IRI include a group working with resettled refugees or other immigrant communities in the Washington area. In addition, Charge proposed a meeting with the American Jewish Community, to share information on Slovak efforts to combat anti-Semitism and hear U.S. concerns about growing intolerance in parts of Europe. This is an area

where the KDH's bona fides are weak.

17. (SBU) Hrusovsky expressed interest in laying a wreath at an appropriate site to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the end of World War II. The most appropriate would be the Iwo Jima memorial, since one of the participants in that flag-raising was a Slovak-American.

18. (SBU) Hrusovsky also plans to take his delegation to Miami for meetings with Sen. Mel Martinez and the Cuban

community.

19. (C) Comment: Hrusovsky made no attempt to hide his public displeasure that President Bush did not have a private meeting with him, and he sees this visit as a way to reestablish his domestic political standing, possibly at the expense of Prime Minister Dzurinda, for whom he has no love lost. Nevertheless, he truly wants his visit to the U.S. to be productive in advancing the bilateral relationship. The focus on explaining Slovakia to Capitol Hill and deepening congressional relations is appropriate. The mix of parties and personalities in the group of five MPs will help keep the trip focused on policy issues rather than on Slovakia's highly-personal internal politics. Hrusovsky can be very stubborn, but when his resolve works to promote areas where we have a common viewpoint, such as Cuba, he can be very effective in moving other members Slovakia's governing coalition. He and others in his party could better serve Slovakia by learning more about the merits of "diversity," both in terms of religion and immigration.

THAYER

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